



INDIANA
DEPARTMENT OF
CHILD
SERVICES

Recognizing & Reporting Child Abuse & Neglect

**Presentation to the Nurse Practice
Council
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**Ginger Schneck
Local Office Director, Jackson County DCS**

Our Mission

The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) protects children from child abuse & neglect & works to ensure their financial support.



Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive families and communities

Child Welfare

Core Functions:

- Protect & keep children safe from abuse & neglect.
- Receive reports of abuse & neglect.
- Complete assessments on reports.
- Ongoing case management to guide a family through services, placement, permanency & case closure.



What is Physical Abuse?

Any non-accidental physical injury to a child caused by a parent or caregiver that results in or threatens serious injury.



What is Neglect?

Parent, guardian or custodian does not supply child with:

- Food
- Shelter
- Education
- Clothing
- Medical Care
- Supervision



How Do You Report Child Abuse?

Call the Child Abuse & Neglect Hotline

800.800.5556



Children thrive in safe, caring, supportive families and communities

Who Should Report?

Indiana is a mandatory reporting state. Any person who has reason to believe a child is being abused or neglected shall make a report.

Medical professionals, teachers & law enforcement officials have a higher duty to report abuse or neglect.



Reporting

Call 800.800.5556. An intake specialist:

- Directs caller immediately to 911 or law enforcement if child is in imminent danger.
- Listens/asks questions using intake guidance tool.
- Captures report information.
- Sends report to local county office to determine next steps



Reporting

Intake specialists will ask questions about the child's current circumstances, safety, & identifying information:

- Names of children involved
- Parent, guardian or custodian's name
- Substance abuse issues
- Mental health concerns
- Ages of children
- Addresses & phone numbers
- Domestic violence
- Weapons in the home

Always report suspected abuse even if you don't know the answers to all the questions.



Reporting

After the call:

- A thorough review of any known previous child protective services history with the family is completed.
- The intake specialist will finish the official intake report.
- Report forwarded to local county office to determine next steps.



Action

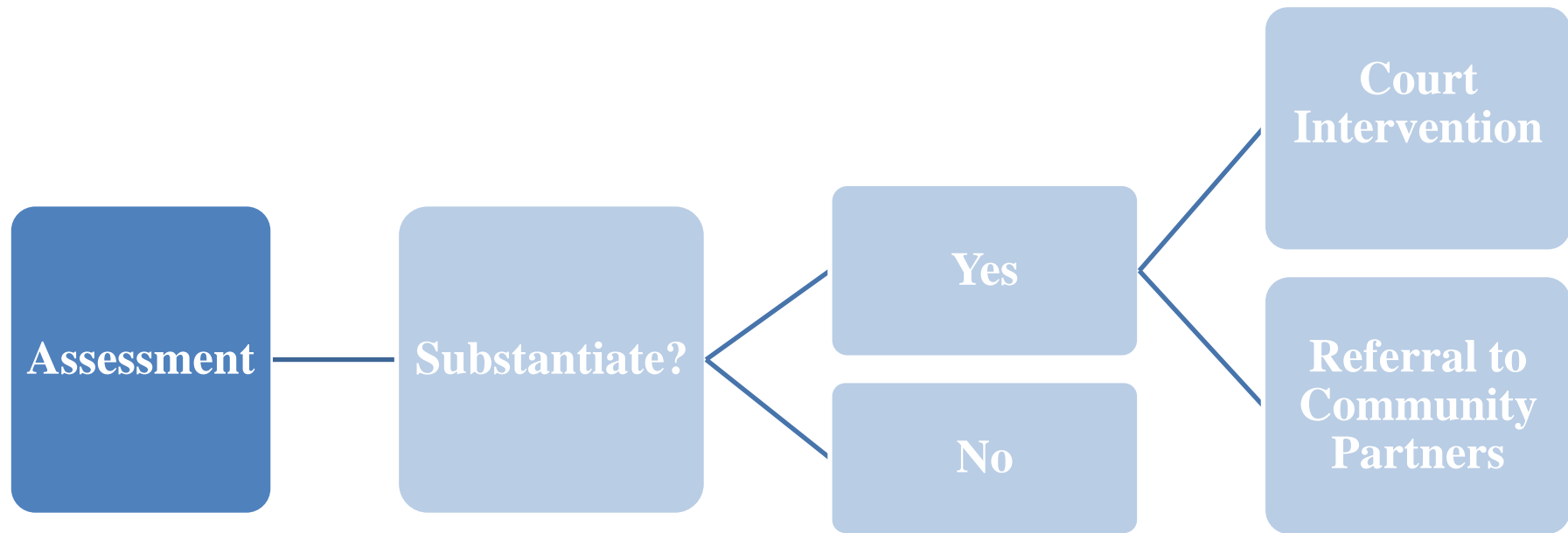
Per Indiana law, certain criteria must be met before a family case manager can be dispatched to a home. If criteria is met, a thorough assessment may be called for:

- Immediately/1 hour (imminent danger)
- Within 24 hours
- Up to 5 days

Calls with similar allegations to an open case are referred for follow-up.



Intervention Process



Assessment

A family case manager will:

- Talk with the report source, parents, extended families, child, siblings, witnesses.
- Visit home or place where alleged abuse/neglect occurred.
- Determine if environment is safe for the child.
- Request medical, mental health examinations, substance abuse screens.



Outcomes of Assessment

Substantiate

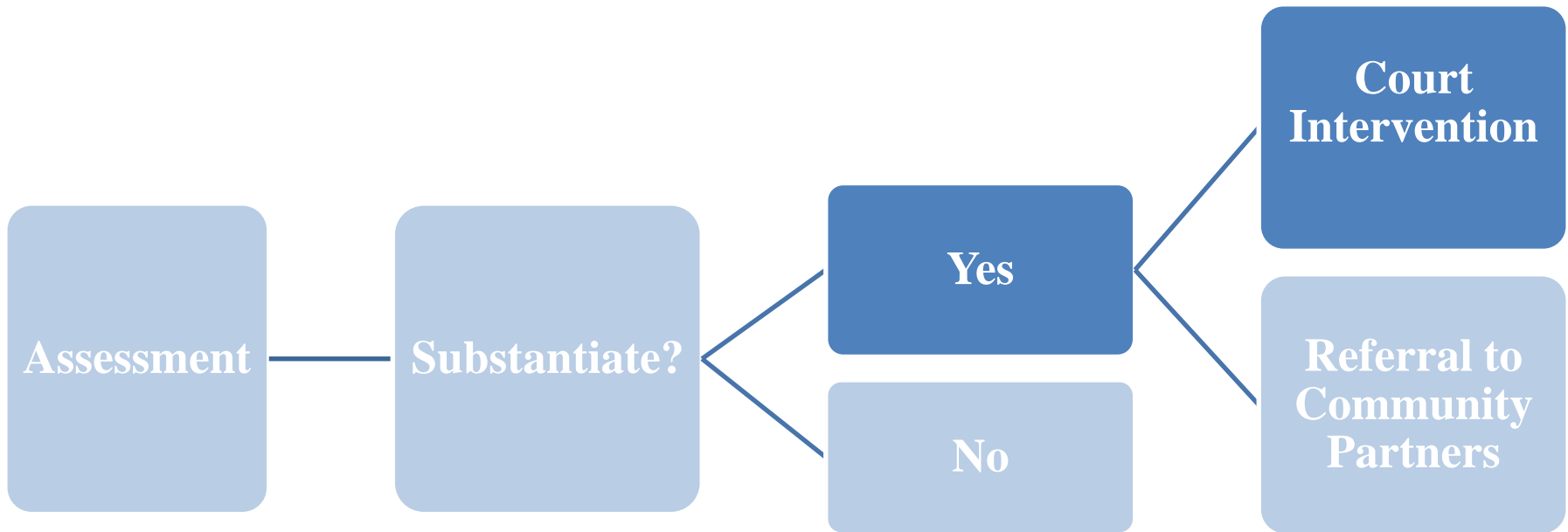
DCS finds enough facts to prove that child abuse or neglect has occurred.

Unsubstantiate

DCS finds no credible evidence that child abuse or neglect has occurred.



Intervention Process



Level of Intervention

Level of intervention with substantiation:

- Informal adjustment.
- Child in Need of Services (CHINS).
- No formal involvement needed.



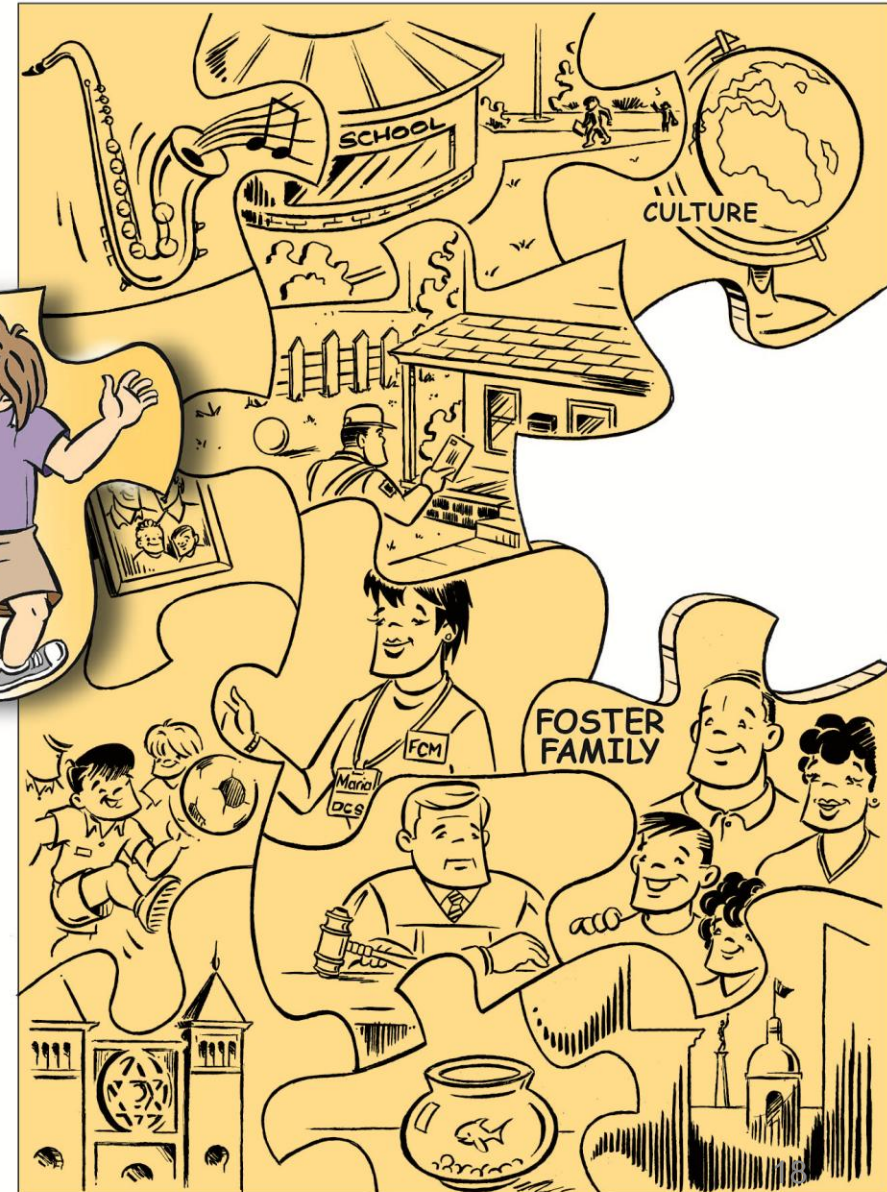
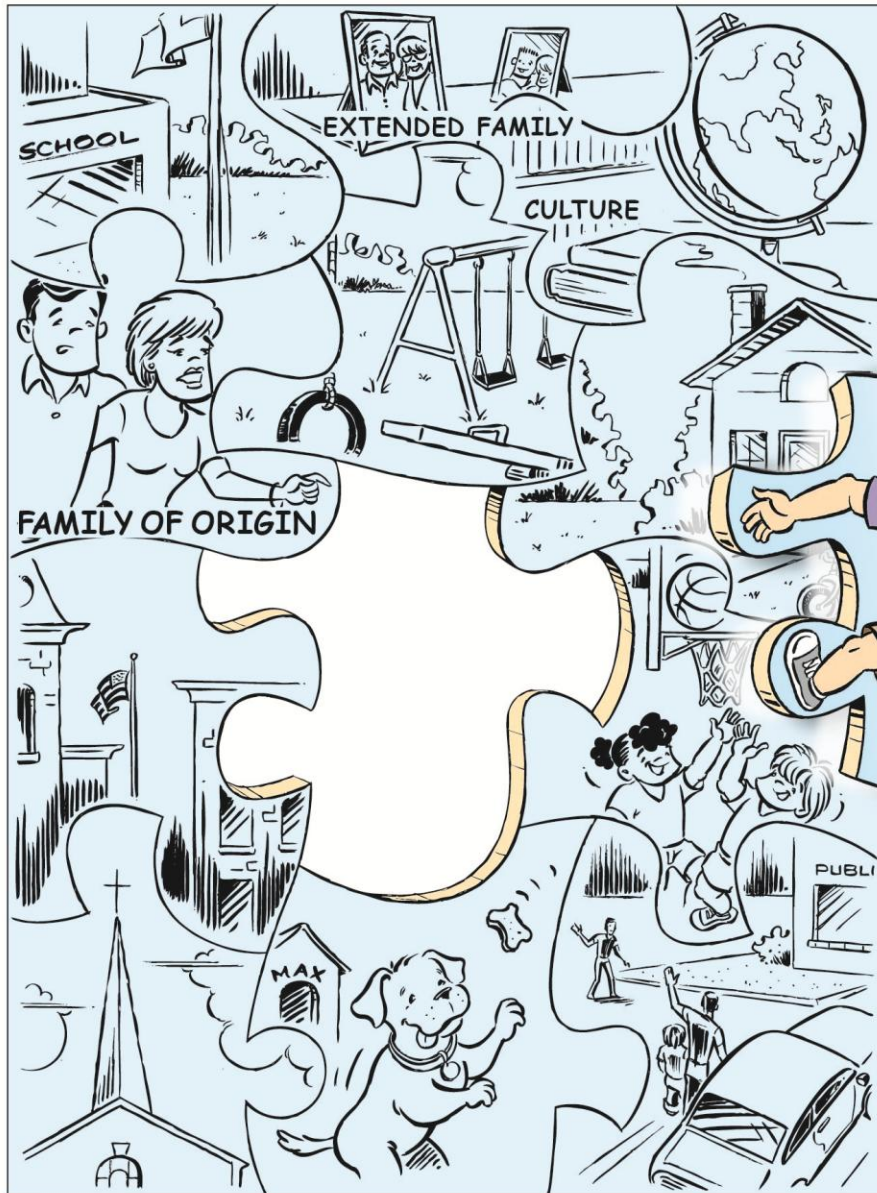
Placement Options

Out-of-home care is sometimes needed:

- Relative caregiver
- Foster home
- Group home
- Residential placement
- Psychiatric facility



One Child, Two Worlds: Where Do I Fit? How Do I Fit?



Safely Home, Families First

- Children are safely at home with services or with appropriate relatives.
- Indiana law requires DCS to consider relative placement before considering any other out-of-home placement.
- National research shows when children are placed with relatives, there are improvements in outcomes, reductions in case length & fewer traumatic effects of removals.



Removal

When deciding to remove a child from a home, DCS will:

- Regard the safety of the child as most important.
- Consider whether the parent is amenable to accepting any needed services.
- Encourage the child & family team.
- Utilize information gathered in the assessment.
- Use information gathered in safety & risk assessments.



Ongoing Case Management

DCS must make reasonable efforts to preserve and reunify the family in line with Indiana law.

Case management assures child's safety by:

- Scheduling regular meetings with the family & child.
- Ensuring needed family & child services are received.
- Convening the child & family team.
- Completing court reports.
- Developing a plan for permanency.
- Facilitating parenting time & sibling visitation.



Local Statistics

- Jackson County DCS averages 78 assessments per month
- Jackson County DCS is currently working with 174 children. 171 – CHINS/ 3-IA's



How You Can Help

- Report child abuse to the Hotline: **800.800.5556.**
- Offer to help your relatives, friends & neighbors who are under stress and may need some assistance. Perhaps you can babysit, cook, provide transportation, mentor.
- Become a foster parent: 888.631.9510.
- Become an adoptive parent: 888.25ADOPT.
- Purchase a 'Kids First' license plate to help fund prevention services.

